

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: AF/E:BCROGERS:JR

APPROVED BY: AF/E:RSBARRETT

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R 242032Z JUL 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 160697

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 4130 ACTION SECSTATE INFO  
TEHRAN 23 JULY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4130

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, ET, IR, US, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA

REF: STATE 156076

1. SUMMARY. ISRAELI MFA VIEWS ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL SITUATION  
IN WAKE OF FEBRUARY MILITARY UPRISING AS EXTREMELY FLUID.  
ARMY ACTING THROUGH NOMINALLY CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IS TRYING  
TO INITIATE REFORMS BUT SEVERE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BLOCK  
IMPLEMENTATION ETHIOPIA IS SEEKING INCREASED ECONOMIC AND  
MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM US, FRANCE AND IRAN. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF JULY 21 DISCUSSED SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA WITH SIDES (MFA,  
AFRICAN DIVISION) IN GENERAL TERMS AS PER DEPARTMENT'S  
INSTRUCTION (REFTTEL). MUCH OF FOLLOWING ANALYSIS MAY ALREADY  
BE WELL KNOWN TO DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY TEHRAN, BUT IS  
SUBMITTED AS SUMMARY OF GOI EVALUATION OF SITUATION.

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3. ACCORDING TO SIDES, ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL SCENE SINCE FEBRUARY

1974 MILITARY UPRISING REMAINS EXTREMELY FLUID. FOUR MAN ARMY COORDINATION COMMITTEE, WITH ROTATING REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL BRANCHES OF ARMY, IS IN EFFECT CONTROLLING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF IEG WHICH REMAINS NOMINALLY CIVILIAN. COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE MIDDLE-LEVEL OFFICERS WHOSE NAMES ARE NOT WELLKNOWN, AND IT IS UNCLEAR WHO IF ANYONE IS ACTUALLY DETERMINING ARMY POLICY. ENTIRE ARISTOCRACY, INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN, IS IN JAIL. ETHIOPIA IS EVOLVING TOWARDS SOME TYPE OF CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY WITH EMPEROR REDUCED TO FIGUREHEAD STATUS, BUT WHETHER GOVERNMENT WILL BE MILITARY, JOINT CIVILIAN-MILITARY OR CIVILIAN REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

4. OSTENSIBLE GOAL OF MILITARY IS TO INITIATE LONG OVERDUE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS. BUT OVERWHELMING PROBLEMS OF FAMINE AND INFLATION, AS WELL AS UNSETTLED POLITICAL SITUATION, SEVERELY LIMIT CHANCES FOR MEANINGFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORM PROGRAM.

5. ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN POLICY IS CURRENTLY DOMINATED BY EFFORTS TO SEEK INCREASED MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM US, FRANCE AND OTHER COUNTRIES TO ENABLE IEG TO WITHSTAND THREAT FROM SOMALI-SOVIET-ARAB FRONT. ETHIOPIA IS UNHAPPY WITH US UNWILLINGNESS TO MEET ITS AID REQUIREMENTS, AND IS BEING FORCED TO TURN TO OTHER POSSIBLE RESOURCES. SOMALIA HAS NOT YET LAUNCHED FRONTAL ATTACK AGAINST ETHIOPIA, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL INCIDENTS ALONG BORDER, INCLUDING RECENT ATTACK ON NEW OIL INSTALLATIONS AT DOLO. ACCORDING TO KENYAN PRESS, SOMALIA HAS RECENTLY ACQUIRED SOVIET MIG 21S ADDING TO ITS ALREADY CONSIDERABLE STOCKPILE OF SOVIET AIRPLANES AND WEAPONS. GOI VIEWS SOMALIA AIR FORCE AS CONTROLLING MILITARY ELEMENT IN AREA. ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT (ELF), SUPPORTED BY LIBYA, SYRIA AND NORTH YEMEN ALSO CONSTITUTES THREAT TO ETHIOPIA. ELF RECENTLY KIDNAPPED FIVE US OILFIELD WORKERS. ETHIOPIA, TOGETHER WITH KENYA AND DJIBOUTI, HAVE COMMON INTEREST IN TRYING TO PREVENT SOMALI OR ELF INCURSIONS.

6. AS REGARDS ETHIOPIAN-IRANIAN CONTACTS, (EMBOFF RAISED ISSUE DISCREETLY IN CONTEXT OF QUESTIONS RE WHICH COUNTRIES MAY BE ASSISTING ETHIOPIA), SIDES SAID THAT GOI HAD LITTLE CONFIDENTIAL

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DETAILED INFORMATION. IEG FOREIGN MINISTER DELIVERED LETTER TO SHAH FROM EMPEROR LAST WEEK, BUT CONTENTS UNKNOWN TO GOI. GOI ASSUMED THAT, GIVEN GROWING STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF AREA, PARTICULARLY AFTER RE-OPENING OF SUEZ CANAL, SHAH WOULD BE PREPARED TO EXTEND MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA.

7. SIDES INFORMED US THAT FRANCE AND ETHIOPIA HAD SIGNED AN

AGREEMENT FOR A \$2-1/2 MILLION PROJECT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF  
PAVED HIGHWAY FROM ADDIS ABABA TO DJIBOUTI, PROJECT IS TO  
BE COMPLETED IN A YEAR.

8. AS REGARDS POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS  
WITH ISRAEL, MFA BELIEVES THAT CURRENT IEG POLITICAL SITUATION  
IS SO CHAOTIC AND UNCERTAIN THAT ISSUE IS NOT EVEN UNDER  
CONSIDERATION. HOWEVER, ETHIOPIA COULD EASILY BE IN SECOND  
WAVE OF COUNTRIES TO RESUME RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL SHOULD  
OTHER AFRICAN STATES TAKE THE LEAD. DESPITE BREAK OF RELATIONS,  
ISRAELI-ETHIOPIAN COMMERICAL RELATIONS HAVE CONTINUED,  
INVOLVING PRESENCE OF ISRAELI BUSINESSMEN IN ADDIS ABABA.

9. WE HAVE NOT MARKED ADDIS ABABA FOR INFO COPY SINCE DEPARTMENT  
REFTEL HAD NOT DONE SO. HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS THIS  
REPORT TO ADDIS ABABA.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL SITUATION, DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, HIGHWAYS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 JUL 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**To:** ADDIS ABABA  
**Type:** TE  
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